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RAISED BILL No. S.B. 126 AN ACT ADDING WOOD SMOKE TO THE PUBLIC HEALTH NUISANCE CODE AND CONCERNING OUTDOOR WOOD-BURNING FURNACES

Chairs Senator Ed Meyer, Representative Richard Roy, and Members of the Environment Committee

My name is Robert Johnson and I live in West Haven, CT.

A statewide ban of Outdoor Wood Furnaces, also known as Outdoor Wood Boilers, is needed for the following reasons.

I became aware of OWFs during regular trips to northern Vermont. Traveling along State Route VT. 114, I noticed several of these devices at homes and farms that are spaced more than 1,000 feet apart and observed them in operation.

During the course of a few years I became aware that some gradually fell into disuse and the huge woodpiles that they required were not being replaced.

I now believe that the realization of the health problems associated with OWFs is what lead to the discontinuance of their use along Vermont Rte. 114.

In general, OWFs emit hundreds or even thousands of times more fine particulate matter than that produced from the burning of oil or gas.

One OWF emits the same amount of particulate matter that 3,000-8,000 homes heated by natural gas would, smaller than 2.5 micrometers (100 times thinner than a human hair). These particle are inhaled, travel through the respiratory tract and lodge deep with the lungs. Even in low concentrations, these particles can harm the health of children, the elderly, and those with existing respiratory diseases. Long-term exposure can even lead to respiratory problems in healthy adults.

One manufacturer of OWFs, Central Boiler of Green Bush, MN, markets an OWF with a water jacket that holds 556 gals of water and is advertised as being able to replace up to 1,500 gals of fuel oil a month. Central Boiler recommends using wood, scrap wood and corn as fuel.

An OWF of this size would require a monthly wood supply of 8 full cords or a stack of wood 4 feet wide, by 4 feet high by 64 feet long. According to a June 2006 report issued by Northeast States for Coordinated Air Management use:

An OWF's large firebox is built such that a user could burn a variety of inappropriate materials that could not be burned in wood stoves or fireplaces. Enforcement

programs have discovered OWFs burning tires, large bags of refuse, and railroad ties.

Is this being counter productive to the huge strides, made at considerable expense, made toward clean air quality? While we dutifully bring our cars into inspection stations and comply with stringent emission standards. One unregulated OWFS can produce the equivalent amount of pollution as hundreds if not thousands of autos. I also discovered that there is a huge battle taking place over this issue.

On one side are the manufacturers of OWFs and expensive legal talent.

On the other side are persons, many in high-risk groups, many of them children, having their health being placed in serious danger. They are being forced to endure harmful quantities of toxic smoke crossing property lines, entering their homes, creeping into bedrooms where the children are sleeping and being unable to abate an obvious danger.

Some of them have been forced to sell their homes, but the problem still exists with the new occupants.

Some have been forced to hire attorneys, and expend large amounts of money. All have appealed to various government agencies and departments that are suppose to protect them without achieving much success.

One does not have to be a scientist, a lawyer, or fill hearing rooms of figures, charts, and legalities to prove the issue. Common sense should prevail.

Just venture into the homes of the victims of the emissions of OWFs. I'm sure many of them will consent to an on site visitation.

Listen to their stories, of children being denied playing in their own yards, repeated life threatening asthma attacks, of bronchial and other respiratory infections, of elderly relatives being rushed to emergency rooms coughing up blood, and even of premature deaths.

To the members of the Environment Committee I ask: Whose side will you take?

Out of state manufacturers of OWFs who are making money with U.S. Sales approaching 500,000 and Connecticut sales and installations of 1,538 units in the period 1990 to 2006 with this number being projected to increase to 4,619 units by this year. (2010).

Or

Connecticut residents who are trying to live in healthy surroundings, enjoy their property, which they pay taxes on, and have the knowledge that their children are safe and secure in their own beds.

Some years from now when they develop COPD, heart conditions, and other health problems including cancer that studies show have been caused by prolonged exposure to emission of this type it will be too late.

IF YOU CAN SMELL IT, YOU ARE BREATHING IT!!

Do the right thing for the people of Connecticut. Protect their health and well-being - ban outdoor wood furnaces in our state.

Thank you for your consideration.

Robert Johnson

West Haven Connecticut